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EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE
UNKNOWN INSECTS INVADE SPANISH VILLAGE
UFO PERIODICALS IN BRITISH LIBRARIES
CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ON UFOS
BUFORA CONFERENCE AT BRISTOL
UFO TERMINOLOGY
BOOK REVIEWS
UFO REPORTS AND IRISH FOLK LORE
LOCAL UFO REPORTS
RECOMMENDED UFO MAGAZINES

EDITORIAL

The Dreaded MIB

There has recently been a spate of articles in UFO publications devoted to stories of occurrences such as visits by mysterious "men in black" who are said to utter threats to UFO witnesses and investigators. For years such reports have been laughed to scorn by many serious ufologists, but it now seems that these bizarre reports may have to be accepted as an integral part of the UFO problem.

(continued on page 42)

EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE

by Alan W. Sharp

In considering the possibility of indigenous extraterrestrial life the only reasonable starting point is life as we know it on Earth. Hence we must also limit discussion to environments which are not too dissimilar from those which obtain on the Earth at present or have obtained here in the past.

It may, as some people have suggested, be possible to visualise life-forms based on elements such as silicon rather than on carbon, but the fact is that the basic building materials for terrestrial life are the elements carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen and it is for combinations of these substances rather than for other more exotic compounds that one must look in the search for life in other parts of the Solar System.

It is, of course, tempting to speculate about the existence of suitable planets and their satellites revolving about other suns than ours where life may exist outside the Solar System, but such theorizing is at present in the realms of science fiction and is likely to remain so for a long time in the future. Thus it can play no part in any rational discussion of possible extraterrestrial living forms based on premises which stand a reasonable chance of verification or disproof.

In addition to the four main elements mentioned above, there are many others whose presence in small amounts is vital to the continuation of life in all except the simplest of organisms. Nevertheless, it is to oxygen and hydrogen, in combination as liquid water, that we must look for the imposition of stringent conditions when assessing external environments.

This is because the complex electro-chemical reactions which are involved in active life processes depend, in part at least, on aqueous solutions, thus restricting suitable sites to those whose temperatures lie approximately within the range 0 degrees to 100 degrees Celsius.

Atmospheres

The existence of a suitable, reasonably dense atmosphere is another decisive prerequisite for the existence of self-replicating organic systems, for without a properly constituted and dense atmosphere there will be insufficient protection against the impact of energetic particles from space and unbearable extremes of ambient temperature on the surface.

This consideration implies that the Earth, for instance, has always possessed an atmosphere of some sort, though possibly of different composition in the past from that which it has at present when carbon dioxide, oxygen and ozone are indispensable.

It is here that initial planetary mass is so important, since by this is largely decided the composition of any residual atmosphere. For Earth, with an escape velocity of 7.1 miles per second, there can be considerable retention, whereas for less massive bodies the ability to retain important gases may be lacking. The Moon, for example, has virtually no atmosphere and offers a stark habitat quite unsuitable for organic development, whereas the major planets are so encased by atmosphere that their surfaces must be inhospitable indeed.

Mercury and Titan may have very tenuous gaseous envelopes; Mars has some atmosphere and that of Venus is in some respects similar to that of Earth but is so hot and dense at the planetary surface that it precludes the existence of life.

The spectroscopic identification of substantial atmospheric constituents at great distances offers no particular problem, but small amounts are far less amenable to current techniques. Even now that an instrumented probe has actually descended through the Cytherean atmosphere there is still some uncertainty about its exact constitution.

The Moon

On a large scale the surface consists of dark areas (maria) and light areas (terrae or highlands. The surface material itself was but poorly understood before the advent of recent space probes and is still the subject of speculation. The "soil" is now known to be reasonably cohesive and able to bear substantial loads.

Certain features show that there has been some volcanic activity but comparison with known terrestrial meteorite craters indicates that many of the lunar craters are the result of impact. It is now realised that both impact and volcanic features occur but no definitive means of identification seems yet to have been found.

It is possible that there may be some subsurface water which may harbour life, but on balance there does not seem to be much hope of finding life there.

Planets

Due to the enormous variations in their distances from the Sun there are corresponding variations in planetary radiation temperatures.

Jupiter has a dense atmosphere composed mainly of hydrogen, methane and ammonia and presents one of the most fascinating problems in physics. The "surface" temperature is a chilly -150 degrees Celsius but the true surface is unknown. The clouds appear to be composed of methane and ammonia crystals but the suggestion that the Great Red Spot is a sort of hydrogen "berg" is quite fantastic. It has not even been possible to decide between rival theories of the centre, e.g. a rocky core or a core composed of highly compressed hydrogen.

Jupiter is too small to be considered a dull star since the conversion of hydrogen into helium is ruled out by insufficient pressure.

Saturn is essentially similar to Jupiter apart from the rings which are of high luminosity and may be composed of ice particles.

The distant planets are a poor prospect for life.

Mercury. Very little is known about this body but it seems to possess very little if any atmosphere although clouds are alleged to have been seen from time to time. The surface temperature is very high and the "clouds" may be volcanic dust. Surface features can not be distinguished but the prospect for life on this planet seems to be negligible.

Venus. The latest news is disappointing for the enthusiasts of indigenous Cytherean life. The planet possesses a featureless photosphere consisting of clouds composed of carbon dioxide crystals. Oxygen and water together amount to some 3% of the atmosphere which is mostly carbon dioxide under high pressure at the planet's surface. The temperature measurements are not of very high accuracy but imply that any surface water would boil off into the atmosphere.

Speculations that native life may exist in the atmosphere in the absence of a suitable surface environment do not merit serious consideration.

Mars. The atmosphere exerts a maximum pressure of only a few millibars, equivalent to that at a height of 100,000 feet on Earth, and is seemingly composed in the main of carbon dioxide. There is a surface temperature variation of 90 Celsius degrees, from -70 degrees C to +20 degrees C, with an average value of considerably less than the freezing point of water.

The latest information shows conditions to be a good deal less favourable to the development of life than some people once thought was the case. The thin atmosphere is but poor protection from solar radiation and the famous colour changes are probably not after all due to vegetation. It is not even known whether the dark areas are lowlands or elevated terrain and if anything the latter hypothesis is currently more in vogue than the former.

The Mariner close-up photographs showed no signs of the infamous "canali" despite assertions to the contrary in some quarters, although they did depict a number of craters similar in general outline to those on the Moon though presumably more worn down by erosion.

It is, however, possible that in the past there have been water courses on the Martian surface although no rivers appeared on the photographs.

If surface water has at one time been present - and there seems to be no reason why this may not have been the case - it is quite possible that indigenous life-forms may have spontaneously arisen, but the present Martian environment would seem to provide a habitat inimical to the preservation of life. Nevertheless, of all the planets in the Solar System apart from Earth this one offers the best hope of finding independent life forms.

The fact that the chances even here must be rated very poorly is indicative of the extraordinarily privileged position of the Earth in this matter.

It is, however, more than likely that two bodies in the Solar System, namely the Moon and Venus, have already been contaminated by self replicating organisms carried from Earth, in which case it may never be possible to answer the question whether these bodies evolved independent life of their own.

UNKNOWN INSECTS INVADE SPANISH VILLAGE - - - - -

According to reports appearing in the Daily Telegraph on July 27th and August 1st, a panic was caused in the little Spanish town of Armental, in the province of Orense, near the Portuguese border, by an invasion of "millions" of unknown insects. The insects are described as being brown in colour, about 1 inch high. They have three pairs of legs, six-inch-long antennae attached to pin-like heads and a "central nerve string" clearly visible on their backs. They have no wings.

The insects closed in on the village in "ant-like attack groupings," and two families had to be evacuated from their homes.

People in and around Armental believed the insects to have come from outer space, because of the fact that several unidentified flying objects had recently been sighted over the reservoir of a hydro-electric plant near the village.

Agricultural experts, health authorities and biologists who came from the province's capital to take samples for laboratory studies were mystified. They agreed that they had never seen or read about insects like these. The head of the Health Department in North-West Spain, Dr Perez, told a reporter that his laboratory was unable to identify the insects, but he said: "We are satisfied they are not dangerous."

However, the villagers of Armental were scared because chemical insecticides, salt and boiling water failed to deter the insects.

UFO PERIODICALS IN BRITISH LIBRARIES - - - - -

The following is a short and very incomplete list of holdings of UFO periodicals in British Public and Institutional libraries. We would like to hear from any periodical that is taken by a British library, with details of which issues the library has, how long they are kept for, what class number or shelf-mark the library has given them (if any), as well as bibliographical details of the publication itself. (Details to John A. Rimmer, please.)

Flying Saucer News Bulletin

Bristol Public Library, from no. 1 onwards.
British Museum Library, from 1955 onwards.

Flying Saucer Review

Blackburn Public Library, keeps for two years.
British Museum Library, Vol 13 No 4 onwards.
Bodleian Library, 1957 onwards.
Hawker Siddeley Dynamics, Stockport, keeps for 5 years.
National Library of Scotland, 1957 onwards.

Flying Saucer News

British Museum Library, 1953 onwards.
Hove Public Library, from No 1 onwards.

Flying Saucer News (Yokohama)

National Lending Library for Science & Technology.

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ON UFOs - - - - -

The following report is taken from the New York Times of July 30th. --

Six Scientists Recommend Flying Saucer Study
House Panel Told Subject Is Serious and Worthy of Wide Federal Support

by Richard D. Lyons. WASHINGTON, July 29 -----

Six scientists insisted before Congress today that unidentified flying objects were fitting subjects for serious investigation, but complained that attempts at rational study had been "laughed out of court."

Several witnesses before the House Committee on Space and Astronautics urged Federal support for a huge programme to collect information aimed at finally settling the debate, which has gone on for decades.

Today's testimony was serious and talk of little green men was taboo, while the term "flying saucer" was mentioned rarely, and then only in whispers.

Yet some bizarre anecdotes were read into the record, including the attempt by a group of Australian kangaroo hunters using a spotlight to communicate with a hovering UFO "even though the men didn't know Morse code."

Witnesses also tended to shrug off such questions as to why, if there really have been thousands of such objects sighted by humans, the supposed saucer crews had failed to make contact with their observers, and why some physical evidence of these many flights has not been produced.

Dr J. Allen Hynek, an astronomer at Northwestern University who has been a consultant to the United States Air Force on the subject, recommended the setting up of "a mechanism for studying

reports with scientific respectability."

"The whole subject has been prejudged," Dr Hynak observed.

He said the United States should seek the co-operation of the United Nations in setting up "an international clearing house" for such information "because there is almost a total lack of quantitative data" about flying saucers.

"I have a hunch that there is scientific pay dirt in a UFO study, possibly very important pay dirt, but there also may be scientific quicksand," Dr Hynak added.

Dr Carl Sagan of Cornell, author of "Intelligent Life in the Universe," who took probably the least positive stand on the existence of UFOs, also noted that "there is a certain view that this committee is not hearing here today."

The reference was to the fact that today's witnesses were at odds with the vast body of scientific opinion that holds that such objects do not exist.

Yet Dr Sagan said it was not inconceivable that there were other planets having civilisations with technologies that are more advanced than that of the Earth.

"It is not beyond any question of doubt that we could be visited by members of such civilisations," Dr Sagan said, adding facetiously that "it may be that things are so bad here that someone up there will come to save us from ourselves."

Dr Sagan cautioned against a widespread UFO search programme because this "requires some harder evidence than now is present."

Because such a programme would be expensive and at high risk of achieving positive results, Dr Sagan said he advocated instead support for attempts to detect and communicate with other civilisations by radio astronomy, coupled with such unmanned planetary flights as those intended to try to find life on Mars.

Dr James E. McDonald, a University of Arizona meteorologist, told the committee that the world's scientific community "tended to discount and regard as nonsense" reports of saucer sightings, adding that serious attempts at studies had been "laughed out of court."

Dr McDonald, who related the kangaroo hunter anecdote as well as several other stories on sightings, insisted that UFOs "are entirely real."

He contended that scientists would not take them seriously because there was no scientific data. Yet he said these same scientists would not support the collection of such data.

He also contended that the news media, including one newspaper in New York City he declined to identify, was refusing to print news of UFO sightings.

Dr McDonald urged an investigation programme. He was supported by Dr Robert L. Hall, a University of Illinois sociology professor, Dr Robert M. L. Baker Jr., of the Computer Sciences Corporation, El Segundo, Calif., and Dr James A. Harder, an associate professor of civil engineering at the University of California, Berkeley.

Representative J. Edward Roush, Democrat of Indiana, who was chairman at today's committee session, urged three months ago that Congress take over a saucer investigation now being conducted by the Air Force.

The study is being conducted by scientists at the University of Colorado. A final report is to be made to the National Academy of Sciences in September.

The following items are taken from reports which appeared in the Washington Star and the Washington Post on July 29th and 30th respectively.....

Dr Hynak proposed:

+ A system under which UFO reports from persons of "high credibility" can be adequately studied.

+ A UFO scientific board of inquiry funded by Federal Money.

+ An attempt to seek the co-operation of the United Nations to get "free interchange" of important data through a clearing house system.

+ A generalised international study.

In a statement to the committee, Dr James E. McDonald said: "My own study of the UFO problem has convinced me that we must rapidly escalate serious scientific attention to this extraordinarily intriguing puzzle." He also said: "The scientific community has been seriously misinformed for 20 years about the potential importance of UFOs."

In the more than 300 studies he has made of UFO sightings, McDonald said, the most convincing thing was that all suggested that the saucers interfered with electrical systems on earth, from automobile ignitions to whole power blackouts.

"No agency has ever investigated this," McDonald said, "and yet it might be the answer to the entire UFO question."

(Press cuttings from the Washington Star, Washington Post and New York Times were sent in by J.J.A. Hennessey, of NICAP)

BUFORA CONFERENCE AT BRISTOL

July 20th, 1968

The Conference was held in the Grosvenor Hotel, Bristol, and our hosts were the members of the British Flying Saucer Bureau, Britain's oldest UFO organisation.

The formal business began at 2.30 p.m. with an address of welcome by the President of the BFSB, Captain E.L. Plunkett. Captain Plunkett described how the BFSB was founded in 1952, with the assistance of Albert K. Bender, of the International Flying Saucer Bureau. Then in 1953 came Bender's famous announcement that he was closing down the IFSB, on account of the "three men in black." However, the BFSB carried on, thanks to the help of the late Dr R. Irving-Bell, and many notable people joined. By the end of 1954, the BFSB, which had by then amalgamated with the Flying Saucer Club, had about 1500 members throughout the world. Later, membership declined, as the Bureau's officers found they had insufficient spare time to devote to it. It was hoped that the Conference would initiate a revival of the BFSB.

Attempts had been made to contact Richard Hughes who was in the early nineteen-fifties Secretary of the Flying Saucer Club and producer of the excellent "Flying Saucer News," but his present whereabouts remained unknown.

Mr Graham F.N. Knewstubb then took the Chair and stressed that the Conference was concerned with the physical side of the UFO problem, as opposed to the more esoteric aspects.

Mr Lionel Beer (Vice-Chairman of BUFORA) then gave an account of this year's BUFORA National Skywatch. A number of groups of observers had reported sightings of UFOs and one unidentified light in the sky was photographed at Guildford. This Skywatch produced at least two somewhat bizarre stories. A group in Northamptonshire noticed strange lights in the distance and some of the watchers went to investigate them. On getting near enough, they discovered that some sort of "black magic orgy" was taking place. A group from Worthing (not connected with the BUFORA Skywatch) were said to have been skywatching at Chanctonbury Ring, near Worthing, when they experienced difficulty in breathing and suddenly feeling waves of cold air passing over them.

A revealing light was thrown on this incident by Mr Omar Fowler, Chairman of the Surrey Investigation Group on Aerial Phenomena, writing in the Group's "SIGAP Newsletter." Five SIGAP members drove down to Worthing on June 29th to meet members of the new group. Mr Fowler records: "However, upon arriving at Worthing it was immediately evident that the new group consisted of young people who, after "Banning the Bomb" and "Protesting at Porton", had decided to try their luck at UFO watching. Any scientific results of their Skywatch at Chanctonbury Ring would be difficult

to imagine. The SIGAP members immediately voted to 'go it alone' and left for the site in two separate cars, rather than endure the jingling of the bells around the Worthing watchers' necks."

Mr Stephen Smith, B.A. (BUFORA Research Director), gave an account of the communication arrangements for the Skywatch, which included a "ham" radio link-up, organised by Colin McCarthy. Mr Smith said that the devising of a rapid and efficient communications system was one of the more important aspects of such exercises.

Several people brought along UFO detectors and described and demonstrated them. It seems that most of the present work on such devices is devoted to improving on the simple magnetic needle detector and the McCarthy coil detector. However, some experiments are being made with devices which respond to heat, light and radioactivity.

Lionel Beer and Stephen Smith described the BUFORA Research Vehicle, which was on view outside the hotel. This vehicle is intended for use on skywatches and on field investigations of important sighting reports. So far it has been used on two national skywatches and has toured Britain, visiting various UFO groups. It was also used during investigations of the Devon "flying cross" sightings last autumn.

Mr G.F.N.Knewstub gave a talk on the elementary mathematical treatment of UFO sighting data, and the most technical talk of the Conference was given by Mr J.Wright on laser holography in connection with UFO photographs.

The last item of the Conference was an open forum. The panel consisted of Lionel Beer, Omar Fowler, Graham Knewstub and Stephen Smith, and Captain Ivar Mackay (Chairman of BUFORA) took the chair.

The Conference was well organised and was generally agreed to have been a success.

UFO TERMINOLOGY

Allen H.Greenfield, of Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A. writes:-

"....My prime reason for writing at this time is to offer a (hopefully) constructive comment regarding your reference to AR on page 23 of your current number.

"You state that a correspondent of yours suggests that 'alternate realities' and several other terms would not generally be used by serious UFO researchers.

"This could be understood in at least two ways: Either your correspondent thinks the term is too unscientific to be used by 'respectable' people in ufology, or he thinks the term is simply not at present very well known.

"If the former is the case, I would offer my militant disagreement. If the latter, I really do not know, but would point out that (A) AR has recently been the recipient of considerable public mention in U.S. UFO publications, and (B) that there is some considerable reason to suggest that the reverse is true, i.e. that AR is at least known to many serious researchers, while the rank and file in ufology may have little or no knowledge of it...."

We hope to publish more about UFO terminology in the next issue and the editors would welcome any comments or suggestions.

SCEPTIC!

A new Canadian magazine, "Phenomena," which deals with UFOs and other unusual topics, has among its contributors a Mr G.E.Lazenbee, who contends that "Saucer Folk are Nuts!" In his first article on this theme he writes:-

"Not long ago there was a short, televised debate on the pros and cons of flying saucers. The saucer man told of a recent sighting by a fully qualified airline pilot, and then asked the anti-saucer man: 'What can you say about evidence from a trained flyer like that?'

"And the other fellow replied: 'Well, all I know is that from now on I'm taking the train.'"

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BOOK REVIEWS

UNINVITED VISITORS - A Biologist Looks at UFOs by Ivan T. Sanderson. Cowles Education Corporation, New York. 6.95 dollars.

Those who like to speculate on the possible implications of the UFO phenomenon will find this book fascinating. To get us into the right mood for what follows the author presents us in the first chapter with the argumant which must by now be familiar to most ufologists. It goes something like this. For ages, ordinary people had reported that stones fell from the sky. Scientists said that this was impossible. Eventually, science was forced to recognise the reality of meteorites. These days, ordinary people report seeing flying saucers and scientists generally dismiss such reports as nonsense. Eventually, though, they will have to accept the reality of flying saucers, just as nineteenth century scientists had to accept the reality of meteorites.

What ufologists generally fail to point out when advancing such an argument is that there are certain snags about UFO observations which tend to make them less convincing than meteorites. Meteorites, unlike flying saucers, do not have the irritating habit of taking off, disintegrating, dissolving or otherwise disappearing before the scientists can get their hands on them. It is possibly this consideration which leads the author to point out that his ideas are somewhat speculative.

The author gives accounts of some of his own enquiries, including an interesting account of his investigation of the classic Flatwoods Monster case of 1952.

Apart from the idea that UFOs may be mechanical devices, Sanderson also quotes observational details which seem to suggest that some of them may be biological in nature, i.e. naturally or artificially produced "space animals." Other bizarre aspects of the mystery, including "teleportation," "invisibility" and the "men in black" are also discussed.

Although some of the speculations may seem pretty wild, especially to those new to ufology, the book is intelligently written and the author does not attempt to disguise the fact that his iddas concerning the nature of UFOs are purely speculative.

FLYING SAUCERS - HERE AND NOW by Frank Edwards. Lyle Stuart, New York. 5.95 dollars.

This book is very similar to the late author's previous work, the best seller "Flying Saucers - Serious Business." Some of the more important sightings and incidents of the past few years are discussed, together with the reactions of the U.S. Air Force, the press and the public.

There is a chapter on the contactees and we learn that Edwards was not disposed to take any of them seriously. He writes that Adamski's "space man" was a woman in the earliest version of the story, which Adamski entitled "An Imaginary Trip to the Moon, Venus and Mars," and registered with the Library of Congress as a work of fiction. Like many other ufologists, Edwards puzzled long over Adamski's famous "scout ship" photographs and finally came to the conclusion that the object was "the top of a canister-type vacuum cleaner, made in 1937." As he does not provide a photograph, or details of the cleaner, this explanation is just as unconvincing as all the other identifications of the "scout ship," including lamp shades, chicken feeders, etc.

This book contains much interesting material, which should prove useful for future reference.

FLYING SAUCER REPORT: UFOs UNIDENTIFIED, UNDENIABLE by Roger H. Stanway and Anthony R. Pace. Privately published by the authors.

The authors are amateur astronomers and members of the Stoke-on-Trent Astronomical Society. They had been interested in UFOs for some time and when some UFO reports appeared in a local paper last August they decided to investigate them.

The results of their investigations are published in this book, which contains brief details of 70 UFO reports in the Staffordshire area, together with fuller details of the more interesting reports.

As well as giving details of the reports, the authors have analysed them and present local information of interest to serious students of the subject. Accounts are also given of their dealings with the Ministry of Defence and various local authorities.

The authors' main conclusion is that "...we have shown a prima facie case for the immediate scientific investigation of the UFO phenomenon in general and the contents of our 'Report' in particular."

This report is a very useful example of a good way to record a local flap for posterity and we strongly recommend it to all who are interested in the investigation of UFO reports.

HAS THE UFO INVASION STARTED? THE ALLENDE LETTERS by Brad Steiger and Joan Whritenour. Award Books, New York/Tandem Books, London. 3/6.

This illustrated book, in magazine format, deals mainly with the more bizarre aspects of the UFO mystery.

The book consists of articles by various writers, including Jerome Clark, Lucius Farish, Gene Duplantier, Ray Palmer, Robert A. Stiff and others. Topics dealt with include the Allende Letters, invisible entities, the MIB, the 1897 Airship and "Holes in the Poles."

Most of the material is interesting, although there is the inevitable nonsense mixed in with it. Devotees of John Keel's articles in FSR will be pleased to note that other writers and investigators confirm his strange findings concerning the associated phenomena.

Other Books Noted

Flying Saucers - Where do they come from? by Richard Tambling. Horwitz Publications, Melbourne, Australia. 60c.

A popular introduction to ufology.

The Flying Saucer Reader Edited by Jay David. Signet Books, New York. UK price 7/6.

Extracts from UFO literature, covering all shades of opinion from Adamski to Menzel.

The Terror Above Us by Malcolm Kent. Tower Books, New York. UK price 3/6.

Another kidnapping story, the content of which is somewhere between Antonio Villas Boas and Barney and Betty Hill.

Why Are They Watching Us? by Allen Louis Erskine. Tower Books, New York. UK price 3/6.

A typical pot-boiler.

FLYING SAUCER REPORT and UFO MANUAL

The book, "Flying Saucer Report," by Roger H. Stanway and Anthony R. Pace, may be obtained from the authors at Newchapel Observatory, Newchapel, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs, price 14/-, including postage. Demand for this book is such that it has already been reprinted.

The authors are now working on a new publication, "Unidentified Flying Objects Manual for Investigators and Researchers." Copies can be reserved from the above address.

Contributions for the Manual are invited and the authors

would particularly welcome suggestions on the following topics:-

1. Interviewing techniques and field investigations.
 2. Determining misidentifications.
 3. Photographic analysis.
 4. Investigators' equipment.
 5. Environmental considerations.
 6. Evaluation of data.
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UFO REPORTS AND IRISH FOLK-LORE

by John A. Rimmer

The similarity of some aspects of folk-lore to modern UFO reports has often been remarked upon, and rival theories have grown up over this. One side maintains that many folk stories are tales of early contacts with UFO operators, the other that the UFO is a modern form of folk-lore, originating in the same part of the subconscious as the leprechauns and goblins of the more traditional form.

Few European countries still have a living folk-lore, perhaps most strong in Ireland. The stories of the Sidhe (a word that covers a wealth of strange people and creatures) are not just the remnants of an earlier tradition, but are still a feature of modern Irish life. People throughout Ireland still report, with all sincerity, contacts with 'little people' of traditional form, and in circumstances which cannot be laughed off with jokes about Guinness! Dozens of such reports are given in folklorist D.A. Macmanus' book "The Middle Kingdom", and although the author has a rather indulgent attitude to the less well authenticated cases, there are sufficient of such substance as to repay study.

What strikes a familiar note in reading many of these reports is the similarity to UFO sightings and contact reports. Although details of course differ fundamentally, often the general 'style' is the same. The indeterminate feeling of friendliness when confronted by an otherwise alarming entity, the semi-rational behaviour of little people, often looking with rather supercilious interest at the human observer, seems to parallel the activities of many UFO 'operators'. Even some of the more extreme aspects of contact stories are paralleled by stories from people who are invited into 'fairy forts' where they are shown wonderful and beautiful lands, often remarkably like the descriptions of 'other planets' from contactees.

One incident in Macmanus' book would in any other circumstances be interpreted as a UFO sighting. Near a small lough in the Castlebar district there are two small hills, well known in the area as fairy forts. A girl was walking home to a farmhouse near the lough late one November night when---

"....her attention was at once caught by the bright illumination across the lough. She stared with amazement for there was the little fort brightly lit up with hundreds of little white lights.it was nothing to her utter astonishment when she saw them all rise up as one and, keeping their formation, sail steadily through the air across the lough towards the other fort not far from the farmhouse."

Another incident in the book brings to mind happenings at Warminster. A farmer, against advice, built an extension to his house across a well known fairy path. The first night after the extension was completed the roof of the house received the famous Warminster battering. After this warning from the fairies the farmer set to and knocked down the extension. The slates on his roof were left alone after that.

It is in the light of these reports that one must consider that Ireland has less UFO activity than any other European country. If therefore the UFO phenomenon, or some aspects of it, is some form of sociological 'need for the inexplicable', then in Ireland the inexplicable takes a different form from that elsewhere. A non-technological, rural society does not have to rationalize on scientific lines, with flying machines and creatures from space. A society which has its history inextricably mixed with legend, myth and folk-lore would be more ready to admit a system of rural entities, associated with earth, trees and animals. In other places where this may be expected to arise other factors may act against acceptance of such a system. Strong religious disapproval of mythological beings (Although the Church is very strong in Ireland, it does not appear to regard the Sidhe with more than mild surprise.) would mean that another rationalization would be employed, either the 'scientific' machine, or an explanation compatible with the orthodox religious belief. Consider Paul Misraki's chapter on the Fatima miracle in his book "Flying Saucers through the Ages".

LOCAL UFO REPORTS

MB 2/68

Crosby, Lancashire August 2nd, 1968 2245-2300 BST

The following report appeared in the Liverpool Daily Post on August 3rd:-

Two youths trailed a mystery object for fifteen minutes late last night. Riding through Crosby on a motor cycle they spotted a cigar shaped object in the sky above them, about 1140 p.m.

Tony Sutcliffe, aged 17, of 2 Sandheys Avenue, Waterloo, who was on the pillion, said: "It was large, glowing pure white, and about 400 feet above us, coming down."

He and his friend, Brian Ormsby, aged 18, of 11 Lulworth Avenue, Waterloo, drove from Little Crosby Road keeping it in view until they reached the beach at Mariners Road, Blundellsands.

"Then it just disappeared," said Tony. "It moved slowly at first, and then seemed to accelerate away. It was not an aircraft, because there was no noise or vapour trail. And it was too low for a satellite."

A visit was made to Crosby and one of the witnesses, Tony Sutcliffe, was interviewed. He said that the time given in the Daily Post report was not the time of the sighting, but the time he phoned the newspaper. The sighting began at 2245 BST, when the witnesses, riding along Little Crosby Road, saw the object apparently hovering over nearby fields. He estimated that it was about 400 feet above the ground and that they approached to within about half a mile of it when it began to move off in a westerly direction, towards the River Mersey. They drove through Crosby, keeping it in view for about 15 minutes, until they reached Mariners Road, when it disappeared. As it disappeared it seemed to be gaining height.

Tony Sutcliffe could not give any estimate of the angular size of the object, but said that it seemed bigger than any aircraft he had ever seen. The object did not have a clearly-defined outline, as the white glow seemed to surround it. Tony said that he thought he could detect markings, like windows, on the object, but he was not sure about this. He said that his friend did not notice any features on the object. He had never seen anything like it before and had no idea as to what it could have been.

MB 3/68

Kirkdale, Liverpool

June 27th, 1968

2010 BST

The following report appeared in the childrens' "All Your Own" column in the Liverpool Echo on August 24th:-

We wish to report that on 27th June, at 8.10 p.m., a flying object was sighted over Bousfield Street, Kirkdale. The object was silver in colour, it was round in shape and it seemed to be spinning around.

It was not a plane or a helicopter because it was too high and it was silent. It moved in the sky for about half a minute, before disappearing behind a chimney. When we told our parents, none of them would believe us.

We then went into the next street and we saw the object near the sun. It seemed to be flashing and then it went out of sight.

We hope that YOU will believe us.

Written by Vivien Mitchell, 7 Bousfield Street, Kirkdale, Liverpool, 4, (and B.K.Gang.)

RECOMMENDED UFO MAGAZINES

Flying Saucer Review This is the world's best known UFO periodical. It deals with all aspects of the UFO mystery and frequently contains technical articles as well as speculation, UFO reports and investigations. It must be regarded as essential reading for all who are seriously interested in the subject.

Editor: Charles Bowen.

Assistant Editor: Dan Lloyd.

Consultants: Gordon Creighton, MA, FRAI, FRGS, FBIS; C.Maxwell Cade, AInstP, FRAS, AFRAES, CEng, FIEE, FIERE; Bernard E.Finch, MRCS, LRCP, DCh, FBIS; Charles H.Gibbs-Smith, MA, FMA, Hon Companion RAES, FRSA; Percy Hennell, FIBP; R.H.B.Winder, BSc, CEng, AMIMEchE.

Editorial Address: 21 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, W.C.2.
Subscriptions: The magazine is published every 2 months. Annual subscription U.K. and Eire £1-8-0, U.S. and Canada 4 dollars, Overseas equivalent of £1-10-0 English Currency. Single copies 5/-. Remittances made payable to "Flying Saucer Review" should be sent to 49a Kings Grove, London, S.E.15.

Spacelink Originally published by the Isle of Wight UFO Investigation Society, this is now an independent magazine. Spacelink contains much interesting material, especially about the activities of the British UFO Research Association and is well worth subscribing to.

Editor: Edgar Hatvany.

Managing Editor: Lionel Beer.

Editorial Consultants: Eric Biddle (European languages); Norman T.Oliver (Astronomy); C.Roy Winstanley (Communications/Electronics).

Editorial address: Edgar Hatvany, 19 Richmond Avenue, East Bedfont, Middlesex.

Subscriptions: The magazine is published quarterly.
Single copies; 3/-, Copies by post, 3/6: Annual postal subscription: 13/6: Overseas subscription: 14/- (U.S.A. 1.75 dollars).

Phenomenes Spatiaux This magazine is published from Paris by the Groupement d'Etude de Phenomenes Aeriens et d'Objets Spatiaux Insolites (GEPA). It is notable for providing highly-detailed reports of meticulous investigations of interesting UFO sightings and incidents. It also prints technical articles and serious, speculative articles. It is to be highly recommended to all ufologists who can read French.

Editor: Rene Fouere, 69, Rue de la Tombe-Issoire, PARIS 14e.

Subscription: The magazine is published quarterly. Annual subscription - 30 F; Single copies - 7.50 F.

The details given above are mainly intended for readers new to the subject: UFO groups will, of course, be well acquainted with these publications.

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EDITORIAL "The Dreaded MIB" (continued from page 29)

Of course, ^{MANY} ~~any~~ of these reports can be explained as hoaxes, or the delusions of suggestible, if sincere, people. However, a study of some of the published reports will show that even if they are delusions, their implications are no less serious.

We hope to try to take an objective look at this matter in a future issue of the Bulletin. If any of our readers know of any unpublished incidents of this kind, we would be pleased if they would inform us.

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LATE NEWS ITEM

September 5th

The following report appeared in the Daily Telegraph on September 5th.

The Air Force in particular and the Administration in general have for years been accused of not taking flying saucers seriously. There have been many dark hints that the truth was being suppressed to spare our nerves, or that Unidentified Flying Objects were space weapons on the secret list.

This week the wheel took a new turn, and various people in Washington, including Representative Edward Roush, of Indiana, started saying that huge sums had been squandered on trying to discover the truth about supposed visitors from other planets. It was estimated that since the Air Force began its continuous study in 1947 as much as £200 million had been spent.

"Sky watch cameras" were set up in the early 1950s to maintain surveillance but they did not work, and more recently there has been the appropriation of £250,000 for the investigation by Dr Edward Condon and a group of scientists at the University of Colorado.

Two key members were dismissed last year for allegedly taking a "pro UFO" stand. Several other dismissals and resignations followed. It is now reported that the Condon Committee has been reduced to three, only one of whom has any scientific credentials.

LATE NEWS ITEM

September 6th

The Daily Express (Sept. 6th) carries an incredible UFO report from Buenos Aires, Argentina. A flying saucer is said to have landed on a motorway near the city. Witnesses alleged that: "It crashed into a car and two bald-headed dwarfs got out and were arrested by local air force authorities."
